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New Pair of Scales

Manchester

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Wes. 1508

A NEW

PAIR OF SCALES

IN WHICH

FACTS ARE WEIGHED.



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NEW PAIR OF SCALES.

AFTER all that has been written respecting the division among the Methodists, many are yet uninformed on that important subject; and the question is still asked, What is the cause, or ground of the separation? To make this plain in as few words as possible, the systems of Church Government in both Connexions, are here contrasted; to which is subjoined, a concise view of the government of the OLD Methodist Connexion, compared with the civil government of England.

I. The Conference or yearly meeting of the Methodist old Connexion, consists of *Preachers only*; and it is their leading principle, to which they firmly adhere, that *no person who is not a travelling preacher* shall be permitted to

I. The Conference of the Methodist new Connexion is composed of an equal number of Circuit Preachers and Delegates, both annually chosen by the Societies to form the yearly assembly, and to transact all the Business

compose a part of that meeting. This may be considered the distinguishing feature of the old Methodist Connexion, from which innumerable calamities have arisen, and eventually occasioned the DIVISION in the Societies.

with which they are intrusted from the Circuits.

II. Any Local Preacher wishing to be admitted a Travelling Preacher in the old Connexion, has only to obtain the favor of the superintendent Preacher of the Circuit; his influence being sufficient to procure admittance, without consulting the Societies; there being no Rules to compel him to take their opinion. In their Minutes of 1802 and 1804, may be seen what privileges the Preachers have condescended to allow (during their pleasure) the Societies, but they have no resemblance to Rules.

II. In the new Connexion a person cannot be admitted as a Circuit or Travelling Preacher, without the approbation of four meetings: viz. the Society; the Leaders and Local Preachers; the Quarterly Meeting; and lastly, the Conference.

III. The old Conference claims a right to most of the Methodist Chapels in the Connexion, and have endeavoured to support their claim by a process in Law; but were defeated in their attempt to seize upon City Road Chapel, London, after expending 2000*l.* in that extraordinary Litigation. The Lord Chancellor told them in open Court, that their Conference was not acknowledged or known in Law; notwithstanding this decisive overthrow, they still frequently threaten Trustees with Prosecutions, when they defend Societies against the unjust and arbitrary conduct of an imperious Preacher. In some Places where the Chapels are nearly out of debt, the Preachers have declared that "it is not the

III. The Chapels of the new Connexion are the entire Property of the respective Societies, and are vested in Trustees for public use only.

people that we want,
 bnt the Chapel." O!
 how is the object of
 the Ministers of Christ
 changed, from the
 salvation of the souls
 of men to that of
 Chapels already re-
 deemed from debt!!
 "Hath a nation
 changed their gods,
 which are yet no
 gods? but my peo-
 ple (Preachers) have
 changed their glory
 for that which doth not
 profit. Be astonished
 O ye heavens, at this,
 and be horribly a-
 fraid, be *very desolate*,
 saith the LORD."

Jer. ii.

IV. The accounts of
 the funds in the old
 Connexion, which are
 very rich and rapidly
 increasing, (particu-
 larly the Book fund)
 are audited by the
 Preachers only; the
 People having no right
 to examine the funds
 raised by their own
 money.

IV. In the new
 Connexion, all money
 transactions are ma-
 naged by the Socie-
 ties, or their chosen
 Representatives.

V. The whole œconomy of the old Connexion creates and continues the most striking difference and division between the Preachers and People; unavoidably leading to deplorable contests and animosities; amongst the numerous instances of discord arising from the system are, the dispute about Mr. WESLEY's Will; the contest respecting the publication of his life; the curious London Lawsuit; the contention respecting the Administration of the Lord's Supper; which caused many to leave the Societies; disputes at Bristol, Manchester, &c. &c. and finally the division.

V. The system of the new Connexion leads to harmony and peace, producing the happiest consequences; manifested by the Societies enjoying all the ordinances without any illiberal restrictions, and by the ingenuous open conduct of the Preachers, thereby acknowledging the Societies as their brethren and fellow counsellors.

VI. The old Connexion have repeatedly affirmed, that the division in 1797 was in consequence of difference in doctrines

VI. The new Connexion hath made public this positive and solemn declaration "*Be it known to all the World that we*

believed and preached by the new Connexion; and so assiduous have they been in making these discoveries, that there are but few erroneous doctrines that have not been laid upon the new Connexion. See their Conference Minutes for 1797, page 34 and 39.

have not separated on account of doctrines."

Church government only, is the ground of the division. See the general Rules, (which may be had of the Preachers) they contain the whole system —also Buck's Theological Dictionary.

VII. The old Connexion have no equitable mode of redress against immoral conduct, or arbitrary power exercised by a Preacher; nor Law to prevent him from admitting or expelling members at his pleasure.

VII. The Societies of the new Connexion have a constitutional mode of redress; for, if a Preacher be immoral, or exercise arbitrary power, he cannot continue a Circuit Preacher; because he could not obtain his annual certificate to Conference from the Quarterly - meeting; neither can a Preacher admit or expel a member without the concurrence of the Society.

The Old Methodist Conference compared with the Govern- ment of England.

VIII. The old Methodist Conference is a self-elected, absolute and arbitrary Government, it neither admits nor secures to the Societies any rights.

VIII. The Laws of England admit and secure to the people their equitable rights, civil and religious; the House of Commons being composed of Members elected by the people, and no Laws can be passed without their concurrence.

IX. The old Methodist Conference have the entire disposal and management of the money raised by the Societies. They are not by any Law compelled to give any account of its application, and they have carefully avoided any examinations, by peremptorily refusing ad-

IX. The executive branch of the English Legislature cannot raise money from the people, or expend the public Treasure without the approbation of Parliament, and a statement laid before them, specifying the particular service each sum is wanted for; and the House of

mittance into Conference to any members of the societies, however well informed and capable of managing money concerns.

Commons is so tenacious of this bulwark of English freedom, that if a money bill (in its progress through the House of Lords) be in the least altered they invariably throw it out when it comes before them again with the alteration, not suffering the Lords to interfere in this essential part of government.

X. The old Methodist Conference promulge laws for the Societies; their own will is their law, and by that they govern and are governed. The Societies have no Representatives, no legal Advocates to plead their cause, no authority to claim any rights, and have none to defend—no right to inspect into any affairs of Conference; the Preachers having an uncontrollable power to withhold

X. In an English Court of Justice the accused man can plead his own cause, or employ Counsel; he is tried by a Jury chosen from impartial unprejudiced Persons of the same rank and quality as him self; he is furnished with a list of their names, and may object to any of them in open Court.

any thing they please; they can make and enforce any Law, the people having no alternative but *obey* or *leave*; 'tis allowed they can grant what they call Privileges, but by the same stretch of power can take them away at pleasure, leaving the people in constant jeopardy. The Societies know not even by what Laws they are to be governed 'till they appear in the Minutes, and then the Preachers are at liberty to explain them as circumstances in their judgment may require. Their Courts of Justice are the District Meetings and Conference; the accused is not permitted to have a copy of the charges preferred against him; nor to employ Counsel to plead his cause; the Jury are all Preachers; he has no right to object against any of

them, however prejudiced against him, or otherwise improper; and his accusers are also his Judges !!!



